Indian Hills home combines 'quirky' style, holiday decor

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Cuts could 'devastate' justice in Kentucky

Situation worsening, protection of citizens at stake, prosecutor warns

Prosecutors brought their concerns about Gov. Matt Bevin's requested 17 percent budget cut to the General Assembly in September. PHOTOS BY PAT MCDONOGH/CJ

Matthew Glowicki Louisville Courier Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The criminal justice system could be crippled if courts and those who work in them have to face significant budget cuts because of state belt-tightening, officials say. ▫ "The primary purpose of government is the protection of its people," said Chris Cohron, commonwealth's attorney in Warren County and co-legislative chair of the Commonwealth's Attorneys Association. "If you don't fund the criminal justice system adequately, we would be failing the citizens of the commonwealth at its most basic level.

"The type of budget cut that's being contemplated would devastate the criminal justice system."

In September, Gov. Matt Bevin's administration sent a letter to many state agencies to cut spending 17 percent under their current budgets — which go

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Monnie Hankins holds his daughter Savannah Stewart while waiting to talk with prosecutors at the Hall of Justice on Dec. 4.

How a Kentucky man brought Santa Claus to town

83 years ago, a Covington man wrote iconic Christmas lyrics in 15 minutes — on the back of an envelope

Thomas Novelly
Louisville Courier Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

More than 70,000 versions of the song "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town" have been recorded by everyone from Frank Sinatra to Mariah Carey.

In the movie "Elf," one character gets all of Manhattan to harmonize the tune in an effort to save Christmas.

Since debuting 83 years ago, its child-like lyrics have immortalized the legend of Santa Claus in the hearts of kids and adults worldwide.

Kentucky can take credit for all that.

It only took Covington native Haven Gillespie 15 minutes to scribble the lyrics on the back of an envelope in the middle of a crowded New York City subway to make holiday history.

Jennifer Gillespie, the songwriter's granddaughter, told Courier Journal that his lyrics are still making money to this day.

"It was an unexpected hit," Jennifer Gillespie said. "As of last year, it was the most played Christmas song of all time by an American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers member."

As a lyricist and composer, Haven Gillespie wrote more than 200 compositions in his life, but none more iconic than his reminder to children to be on their best behavior for ole Saint Nick.

While the song brings the joy of the season to everyone in earshot, it propelled him into some dark periods of his life. The tune was published right around the time of his brother's death, and it forever preserved some painful memories for him, according to his biography in the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

The song made him a celebrity and he embraced the partying lifestyle which accompanied it. But despite his hardships, Haven Gillespie overcame his demons, and he left the world with the greatest Christmas gift of all time.

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